

Great Master 201

Chapter 201 'Spirit Medium's Essential Skill!

Outside No. 2 Cork Street, stood a couple, followed by a coachman and a bodyguard.

The couple were both attired fittingly for the upper class, the man in a four-piece suit and his cane topped with a pure wooden carving of a horse head, the woman's long skirt appeared simple, but the material was extraordinary silk, while the pearl necklace around her neck showcased pearls all of the same size, emitting a soft and warm glow in the morning light.

Upon seeing Arthur open the door, the couple greeted him in unison with a bow.

The precision of their etiquette was as if measured with a ruler.

Wealthy, literate, and had undergone training including manners for high society, but they were not nobility—if they were, they wouldn't have sought out him so openly and aboveboard.

Nor would they have screamed for help.

The 'honor' of the nobility didn't permit such actions.

And when faced with problems, nobles had their own ways of resolving them.

"Good day, Mr. Kledos, sorry to intrude!"

The gentleman switched his cane to his left hand and extended his right.

Arthur shook his hand briefly and then let go.

However, the calluses on the man's palm were unmistakably clear.

Arthur took another glance at the man's clothes, the ironed suit was very tidy but not new, and the cane was filled with the marks of years—such effects could not have been achieved without a decade's use, and the veins bulging on the back of his palm, which clutched the cane's head, displayed an inner restlessness, yet he still endeavored to endure.

He had once struggled hard, possessing a tenacious quality and the ability to stay calm.

'Not inheritance, but a self-made entrepreneur of a generation of rich merchants, perhaps?' Arthur speculated, stepping aside and raising his hand to invite the couple into No. 2 Cork Street—although Haywood was inside, there was nothing shameful about their relationship, especially since the public would eventually know about their relationship as the haunted house acquisition began, it was better to acknowledge the employment relationship openly at this moment.

Of course, a more critical reason was that Haywood took two short, sharp breaths upon seeing the couple.

Arthur was curious about their relationship.

Even though in his plans, Haywood's 'haunted house purchase' was only of secondary priority, Arthur still didn't wish for any regrettable incidents to occur.

"Good day, Mr. Bernice, Mrs. Bernice."

As the couple entered the Spirit Medium Parlor, Haywood immediately greeted them.

"Good day, and you are?"

The man responded and then showed a puzzled face.

Clearly, the two did not know each other, and it seemed that Haywood recognized Mr. Bernice unilaterally—after reaching this conclusion, Arthur began to search his mind for information related to the name 'Bernice'.

And almost instantly, 'Bernice Trading Company' emerged in his thoughts.

After previously attending a salon hosted by Marinda, for the sake of a thorough recap, Arthur had detailed knowledge of some of the well-known businesses in South Los.

Among them, 'Bernice Trading Company' ranked highly.

Its main business was dock storage, with a side business in maritime transport, and sprinkled with a few retail shops and a clay pottery workshop, this was all there was to 'Bernice Trading Company'.

Furthermore, compared to other businesses that had multiple responsibilities, Bernice Trading Company was quite pure—it was solely controlled by the Bernice family... no, to be precise, solely by Mr. Bernice himself.

Mr. Bernice's father was a craftsman who made clay pottery.

Mr. Bernice, who had learned the trade by his father's side since he was young, was not content with his lot and at the age of fifteen, he secretly set out to sea for the first time, taking on the dangerous job of a ship's ballaster.

At the time, the Seven Years' War was raging between the Eastern and Western Seas, compounded by rampant piracy, each voyage was a gamble with life itself, but the profits matched the risks.

In five years, Mr. Bernice had accumulated a considerable fortune and began buying up large tracts of barren land in the Docklands to build warehouses.

Just a year later, with the end of the Seven Years' War, the land Mr. Bernice had acquired began to soar in value, but the son of the craftsman did not sell the land. Instead, he focused on transportation, continuing up to the present and making 'Bernice Trading Company' one of the leading names in South Los—rumors say that half the warehouses on the docks belong to Mr. Bernice.

"May I ask what has happened?" Arthur inquired without any hint of concern in his voice.

His "Shadow Count" plan naturally couldn't do without the docks.

The Bernice family, with their large warehouses, was an excellent partner, but the young 'Spirit Medium' wasn't in a hurry.

He knew very well how difficult a seasoned founder like Bernice could be to deal with.

If he took the initiative, it would only make the other party wary, and things would become more complicated, far from being 'open and aboveboard.'

"My son, Clay has been missing for three days—he has never been away at night, let alone for three days, and I've asked his friends; no one has seen him in these three days, which is also impossible. He who loves salons could not possibly be out of touch with people for so long."

No sooner had Arthur finished speaking than Mrs. Bernice immediately said.

At the same time, she took out a portrait of her son, Clay.

The Bernice family had two sons and a daughter.

The eldest son, Chloe.

The second son, Clay.

The daughter, Edith.

The designated heir, Chloe, began learning from his father early on. In contrast, Clay, who also had succession rights, had no interest in the family business, becoming a true prodigal son, while the daughter Edith was rarely seen in public, only known to be in poor health.

Arthur's gaze fell upon the portrait.

The realistic style allowed the young 'Spirit Medium' to confirm that Clay was a rather handsome young man, and given his considerable worth, he must have been quite popular with the girls—Bernice had already made a will, leaving sixty percent of the estate to the eldest son, which was only fair for helping his father. The remaining forty percent was to be split between the second son and daughter, but they were not allowed to sell the inheritance for twenty years and could only receive dividends.

Even so, the dividends were an impressively large sum.

Enough to attract the favor of many women.

While the young 'Spirit Medium' was carefully examining the portrait of Clay, Mrs. Bernice continued to speak.

"Since the last return from 'Chasing the Wind,' Clay has been acting strangely, rather mysterious."

"'Chasing the Wind'?"

Upon hearing this term, Arthur was startled.

Mr. Bernice's expression darkened immediately.

Mrs. Bernice quickly raised her hand to soothe her husband before continuing.

"It means pursuing the storm, feeling the thunder when a storm is approaching. Clay thinks it's a symbol of courage—four days ago, when South Los was hit by a storm, Clay went to the docks to 'Chase the Wind.'

"I see."

Arthur said this aloud, but internally he could not help but scoff.

How idle do you have to be to think of such a boring activity?

Chasing the wind, a symbol of courage?

Why not chase after the thunder themselves?

They should let the 'Countess' who creates 'storms' strike down with a bolt of thunder, and let you feel what it's like to be thoroughly shocked.

Moreover, more importantly, a disappearance case like this one couldn't possibly be resolved immediately; it would require time-consuming investigation and evidence collection to yield results.

This elaborate approach did not fit the 'Spirit Medium' persona he had carved out for himself.

Therefore, mimicking Old Charlie's way of 'communicating' with clients from his memories, he leaned back slightly in his chair, his eyes filled with pity, and his voice became even more ethereal—

"There will always be creatures on the earth who dare to face the majesty of thunder...

And some are arrogant, foolish and blindly unaware. Darkness, solitude, fresh blood, all that is shattered will converge in that moment."

His words were detached, the 'Bluff' flashed urgently.

Chapter 202 The Mansion Under Destiny... Maker?

"Please, you must save Clay!"

As soon as Arthur had finished speaking, Mrs. Bernice repeated urgently.

No one knows a child better than their mother.

Mrs. Bernice would never consider her son as someone brave enough to "face the might of thunder," a hero—Clay's so-called "Chasing the Wind" was merely showing off to friends at a salon.

And that was the epitome of "blind folly without self-awareness!"

But what worried Mrs. Bernice the most were phrases like "darkness, loneliness, fresh blood, broken."

She feared that Clay might meet with misfortune.

Affected by worry, at any time, it was always so.

Perhaps because of this, Old Charlie had come up with a similar pattern of speech—simply put, most situations could be fit into this rhetoric.

Who doesn't have moments of arrogance?

And who can guarantee they're always right?

Certainly, there is foolish ignorance without self-awareness!

And darkness, loneliness, fresh blood, broken?

These could all be explained should disaster strike.

It was just the phrase "There will always be creatures on earth brave enough to face the might of thunder" that was different.

Because Arthur added that himself.

Following Old Charlie's procedure, it was usually time to accept payment by now.

But Arthur wouldn't do so.

He had grander schemes in mind.

So, when he saw Mrs. Bernice pulling out a cheque from her purse, the young "Spirit Medium" slightly furrowed his brow and promptly refused, saying—

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Bernice, I cannot accept your payment."

Arthur said this, and Mrs. Bernice was taken aback.

In fact, Mr. Bernice was also stunned by his side.

When Arthur uttered those obscure, perplexing words, Mr. Bernice almost equated Arthur with those swindlers.

In Mr. Bernice's decades of life, he had seen too many of these fraudsters.

Each one was astonishingly magical before being exposed.

And disgustingly deceptive after being exposed.

Could it be that this man has a grander scheme?

Mr. Bernice looked at Arthur, his eyes reflecting thoughtfulness, yet he did not stop his wife's plea—

"Is it not enough money?"

I can add more..."

"It's not about the money, it's about fate!

And destiny!"

Arthur, looking at Mrs. Bernice with increased pity in his eyes, spoke with a barely discernible sigh.

"If possible, I both hope to meet him and hope he never meets me."

Having said that, Arthur stood up and opened the door to the Spirit Medium Parlor.

The meaning couldn't be clearer.

Mrs. Bernice still wanted to plead, but Mr. Bernice stopped her—Arthur's last ambiguous words made Mr. Bernice even more convinced that Arthur had ulterior motives, although he couldn't pinpoint what Arthur intended to do, but he knew that continuing to plead would not yield any results and would only give Arthur more leverage.

Outside No. 2 Cork Street, after Mr. and Mrs. Bernice had left, Arthur returned to his room.

"Eagle Eye" and "Insight" informed him of Mr. Bernice's suspicions, but that was exactly what Arthur wanted.

To quickly establish a good relationship with someone like Mr. Bernice, ordinary means wouldn't work.

Only an approach that broke conventions could possibly work.

Of course, the condition was that they must find the prodigal son, Clay.

In this, Arthur was quite confident.

In finding people and gathering information, Wiggins was an expert, especially as his subordinates had increased, making the work even more efficient.

If Wiggins couldn't find him?

Then, naturally, there was Marinda.

Such was their close relationship that Arthur believed Marinda would definitely help him—considering the vast warehouses in the Docklands, he couldn't believe this woman wouldn't be tempted.

He had no previous opportunity to connect with the Bernices, but now he did, and with this woman's personality, she would surely lend a hand.

In fact, the Lady of the Eternal Night had invited the Bernices to a salon, but it was politely declined by them.

"Unaccustomed to it" was the reason given!

Anyone could see that it was just an excuse made by the Bernices, as they did not want to attend.

As for why?

Rumors had it that the Lady of the Eternal Night used bloody methods when she first arrived in South Los.

Of course, even though disliked by some, the Lady of the Eternal Night still did as she pleased.

And that hadn't changed even now.

Thinking this, Arthur once again picked up the documents collected by Haywood from the desk, naturally continuing the conversation that Mr. and Mrs. Bernice had interrupted—

"Haywood, do you have any recommendations?"

The documents in his hands numbered in the hundreds, which astonished Arthur.

He hadn't known that South Los had so many haunted houses.

Or more precisely...

So many unnatural deaths had occurred in South Los.

After all, a room where one or two people died couldn't be called a haunted house; it had to be the kind where incidents occurred repeatedly.

Of course, that had nothing to do with him.

He had only been in South Los for a few days, hadn't he?

"Yes, the first I'd recommend is this one, No. 14 Cork Street—maybe you've heard of it, it's in your district. Because the former tenants, an entire family, died there under tragic circumstances, no one dares to rent it anymore. The landlord can only drop the price for a sale, now it's only 500 gold notes, but I am confident I can talk him down to 400 gold notes!"

You should know, a house in Dar Alley needs 400 gold notes.

The normal price for Cork Street is between 1200 to 2500 gold notes.

400 gold notes is practically the base price.

Moreover, Arthur was well aware that No. 14 Cork Street was a fine house.

Without realizing it, the young 'Spirit Medium' slightly nodded.

"There's also No. 333 Russell Street. This place had two murder cases in the past. Recently, when the landlord decided to renovate, he found some strange traces in the room that frightened him so much he dared not enter the house again. The overall price around there is 800-900 gold notes, but the landlord is willing to sell for 200 gold notes, and I can probably talk him down even further."

Seeing Arthur nod, Haywood immediately felt encouraged and brought out the houses with the best value for money that he had collected.

Russell Street is also a middle-class neighborhood in the Shire District and part of a large community with complete infrastructure and a high concentration of people, enough to form high rent and sale prices.

If it weren't for the terrifying murders in the past and the noise from the landlord's recent renovation, a price of 200 gold notes would be impossible.

Of course, Haywood was confident he could get the house for between 150-175 gold notes.

While listening to Haywood's description, Arthur's expression turned somewhat strange.

How is this related to me?

I'm not some 'Creator of the Haunted House'!

"Anything else?"

The undeterred Arthur continued to ask.

While Haywood found it odd that Arthur wasn't more interested in these two exceptionally priced houses, he didn't pause and immediately said.

"Yes, No. 17 Xilin Street!"

When Haywood mentioned Xilin Street, Arthur's heart filled with dread, fearing he would mention Fornac's 'Craft Carving Workshop'.

Fortunately, that was not the case.

Instantly, the young 'Spirit Medium's' mood greatly improved.

"Let's go there first!"

He said so.

"Alright!"

Haywood nodded and sprang into action.

From simply hiring a carriage to the more complex task of communicating with the landlord for the keys to open the door, Haywood handled it all—this unscrupulous landlord showcasing his capabilities in front of Arthur.

"Sir, this is quite a nice house."

The landlord and Haywood, walking shoulder to shoulder into the small courtyard of No. 17 Xilin Street, didn't forget to turn his head to Arthur and say.

From Haywood's respectful demeanor towards Arthur, the landlord knew who the real decision-maker was.

"Hmm."

Arthur noncommittally nodded, his eyes filled with resignation.

Because—

he smelled the Scent of Blood.

The Scent of Blood wafting out from No. 17 Xilin Street.

The landlord was also puzzled by Arthur's expression, but the next moment, when he opened the door, he forgot all about it.

"Ahhhhhh!"

Seeing the body lying in the main hall of the house, the landlord screamed.

And Haywood was also shocked, stepping back repeatedly. Despite his experience on Pine Street, he should not have been so shaken, but the corpse was too unexpected.

Only to hear Haywood exclaim—

"Clay!"

Chapter 203: Confusion x Compensation x Her

Clay was dead.

At this moment, Bernice's younger son lay flat on his back on the floor, his throat slit open, blood pooled all around him, his eyes wide open.

Haywood stared at the scene, completely stunned.

Just moments before at No. 2 Cork Street, Haywood had never doubted Arthur like Mr. and Mrs. Bernice had, having witnessed Arthur's abilities, he had full confidence in them.

But this ruthless landlord had never imagined that Arthur could be this powerful.

To be able to "prophecy"!

"If it's possible, I both hope to encounter him and hope he does not encounter me."

Look at this sentence!

By that time, Lord Kledos probably had already foreseen what was going to befall Clay, yet the compassionate Lord Kledos did not give up, nor did he wish for Mr. and Mrs. Bernice to suffer this unprecedented sorrow, and therefore, he chose No. 17 Xilin Street over the much more cost-effective No. 14 Cork Street and No. 333 Russell Street.

All to save the poor Clay.

Unfortunately...

It was still too late!

"So that's how it is—Your magnanimity truly inspires respect, offering help to the misunderstood without holding any grudges," said Haywood, his face revealing a sudden understanding as he bowed respectfully to Arthur.

This time, the ruthless landlord looked at Arthur with not only the usual fear but also a hint of respect added.

Arthur really wanted to say, you're overthinking it.

Coincidence!

It was all a coincidence. I was just trying to avoid becoming the "Creator of the Haunted House", who knew I would run straight into "Grim Reaper's Favor."

Arthur, internally roaring with anger, wore a faint look of sorrow on his face as he stared at the body and said softly—

"Go call the police."

"Yes, Lord Kledos."

Haywood rushed outside, while the landlord remained in shock even after the police arrived.

As Malz entered No. 17 Xilin Street and saw Arthur standing next to the body, he couldn't help but cover his face, and after approaching, he whispered—

"Arthur, how about you rest at home for a few weeks before going out again?

Or perhaps, you could travel to another city for a few weeks?

Everyone at the Shire District Police Station is overworked; just look at Dico's dark circles. He hasn't gone home to see his daughter in two days."

Arthur simply rolled his eyes upon hearing this.

He didn't want this either!

But it was such a coincidence; wherever he went, someone ended up dead.

"Could it be some unknown side effect of the so-called 'Dark Serpent' bloodline?" Arthur wondered to himself, patting the old sheriff's shoulder.

"What about Bob?

I'm looking forward to your friend's arrival—I have a feeling that once he comes, we won't have to go through this anymore!

There will definitely be a change!" Arthur pointed at Clay's body on the ground and said with conviction.

"He should be here soon. Although he didn't reply to my message, I know that he will come!" the old sheriff assured.

Arthur nodded, and then both men turned their full attention back to Clay.

"The technique was quite professional, and without a moment's hesitation, the murderer slit the victim's throat from behind," the old sheriff said confidently, staring at the wound on the corpse's neck. However, he frowned slightly at the sight of other injuries on the body.

On Clay's chest and abdomen, there were more wounds.

By the looks of them, they were caused by a small knife or a dagger.

But the depth of the wounds varied.

Moreover, the angle at which they were inflicted on the body was irregular.

The old sheriff, who had served in the Seven Years' War and then spent thirty years as a policeman, immediately thought of one possibility: multiple perpetrators.

Instinctively, the old sheriff cast an inquiring look at his partner.

Arthur agreed with the old sheriff's assessment.

Meanwhile, he also pointed to the floor drowned in blood.

"Hmm?"

The old sheriff squinted his eyes and looked closely, only then surprised to notice that under the covering of the corpse's blood, someone had drawn a pentagram on the floorboard with white and red powders.

Instantly, the old sheriff was startled.

"Could it be?"

"It's not."

Arthur responded with certainty, and at the same time, picked up a bit of the white and red powders from the corner that were not drowned by the fresh blood and handed it to the old sheriff.

"Is this... salt and red brick powder?"

After receiving it, the old sheriff rubbed it with his fingers and sniffed it under his nose, then a look of surprise appeared on his face.

"Salt can drive away evil, and red brick powder can block the peeping of evil spirits—this is true. But the salt must be coarse salt, while the red brick powder must be chosen from the red bricks of a thriving family's building, and it also needs to be consecrated! More importantly, they can be used together, but must be clearly separated. Like this mixture, it will only interfere with their effects, and even have the opposite effect."

Arthur explained.

This was the most common method of exorcism used by 'hunters' that 'Detective' Alberts had mentioned during a conversation. If you could make salt bullets and shoot them from a firearm, the effect would be better. Combined with iron and silver, it could effectively harm evil spirits—but the premise is, these items only work if they are consecrated in the unique way of the 'hunters'; without consecration, they're just displays.

In simple terms, they're useful only after being consecrated; without it, they're just decorations.

"So, someone half understands these things, trying to be mystifying?"

The old sheriff voiced his own speculation.

"If that's all there is to it, then that really would be the best outcome—those who know only half are always the most frightening. Especially on the mystic side, those who cause big trouble are always these people!"

Arthur lowered his voice and made a gesture to the old sheriff where no one else could see.

The old sheriff immediately tensed up.

Without showing any change in expression, the old sheriff turned around and began to call out as per procedure—

"Hunter, Newt, you guys seal the house.

Dico, go find out the identity of the deceased..."

"He is Clay, the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Bernice."

Arthur said indifferently from the side.

"Eh, is his spirit nearby?"

The old sheriff looked around curiously, obviously trying to find the spirit of Clay.

"No, it was his parents who asked me to find him."

Arthur shook his head.

Suddenly, the old sheriff's expression became complicated.

He didn't quite know what to make of Clay's parents.

Of course, there was no malice involved. The old sheriff had a great deal of trust in the abilities of his partner, but was it too careless of them to entrust a person favored by the 'Grim Reaper' to find their son?

Poor Clay.

The old sheriff sighed inwardly and continued with what he had been saying—

"Dico, go and notify the deceased's relatives.

Simon, you take people to visit the neighbors, see if anyone heard or saw anything last night."

"Yes, Police Chief!"

The officers, along with the patrolmen, started to take action.

The old sheriff wasn't idle either. He started to inspect the interior of No. 17 Xilin Street meticulously along with Arthur.

However, the murderer had cleaned the entire building very cleanly, leaving no clues.

About half an hour later, Mr. and Mrs. Bernice, who had just left not long ago, appeared again, with Mrs. Bernice crying out loud upon seeing her dead son.

Mr. Bernice, on the other hand, had a sullen face, and murderous intent began to boil in his eyes. Arthur saw clearly that this gentleman made several gestures to his bodyguard.

How could a person who started from shipping be simple?

Then, the gentleman walked directly up to Arthur and said earnestly—

"20,000 gold notes to help me find the person who killed Clay!"

Mr. Bernice named a true high price.

In response, Arthur showed surprise, but the young 'Spirit Medium's' attention was still drawn by someone who stepped down from a carriage behind him, revealing surprise in his eyes—

Why has she come?

Chapter 204: Extraordinary from Birth!

Under the sunlight, ivy leapt over the garden wall on Xilin Street, and clusters of white unripe berries gently pulled it down, hanging over the side of the street. When the round-faced, dark-eyed young girl stepped off the carriage and saw the berries, her face lit up with surprise.

She had seen them before!

More precisely, she had seen these berries in a daze last night.

So, what comes next...

Linda Camille's gaze turned this way.

Immediately, Linda caught sight of Arthur, and a gleam of excitement appeared in the girl's eyes, but it quickly turned somewhat dim.

Without a doubt, when Ms. Yevna Kledos Camille left home, she had made sure to tell her daughter everything to prevent any unnecessary problems that might arise in the future.

Undoubtedly, Ms. Camille knew her daughter very well; she did not wish for the fourth generation of the Kledos family to become too 'Pureblood'.

They were not like those 'ambitious' nobles.

Of course, there were some things that Ms. Camille could not have foreseen—

Arthur was looking at Linda Camille... no!

More accurately, he was looking at his young aunt.

The young 'Spirit Medium' felt increasingly embarrassed.

Clearly, the young 'Spirit Medium' had yet to figure out how to interact with his aunt, who was a year younger than himself.

'Damn Old Charlie, what a 'gent(leman)' you truly are!' Arthur thought to himself while his gaze towards Linda Camille carried a hint of inquiry.

It was not surprising for the Camille family to be acquainted with the Bernice family, given their wealth.

However, Arthur was concerned about Linda's initial expression, that mixture of joy, relief, and eager anticipation which he found intriguing.

But Arthur didn't immediately ask about it.

Before him stood an important client—

"Mr. Bernice, this is not about the money!"

As Arthur faced Mr. Bernice, who was filled with a murderous intent borne of the grief of losing a son, he softly replied while pointing at the 'ritual tracks' concealed beneath Fresh Blood.

Although it was not very effective, Arthur still chose to refer to those lines created from a mixture of salt and turning powder as 'ritual tracks'.

Mr. Bernice followed Arthur's finger and inspected the lines closely.

As the businessman discerned what was made from the salt and turning powder, a deeper darkness clouded his eyes.

Undoubtedly, this businessman knew something.

Not much, but enough for him to make a correct judgment—

"20,000 Gold Coins to find the person who killed Clay!"

The amount offered as a reward remained the same, but its value had doubled.

"No. 2 Cork Street, the Spirit Medium Parlor is at your service—please give me some time, and I will provide you with a satisfactory answer."

Even though Arthur was eager to get directly involved in the Bernice family's 'warehouse business,' he was well aware that the time was not right.

And 20,000 Gold Coins was already the limit for the businessman.

Entrepreneurs like him would not squander money as the second generation does; they calculated the value of every Coin carefully.

Because they knew all too well how hard it was to earn money.

"I look forward to it."

Hearing Arthur's words, Mr. Bernice nodded slightly and turned to walk toward his wife, consoling her in a low voice with an arm around her shoulders.

Arthur then approached Linda Camille.

Seeing Arthur walking towards her, Linda instinctively felt inexplicably flustered—Arthur was embarrassed, and Linda even more so.

That naïvely sweet feeling, shattered by her mother's words 'you are his aunt.'

Linda was completely overwhelmed by indescribable emotions and felt lost and bewildered.

But it was during this time that some bizarre incidents began to occur. In such a state, she 'saw' quite a few things.

Not complete events, just fragmentary snippets.

Some were like dreams, yet Linda was convinced she was awake.

So, after her mother's departure, Linda became utterly engrossed in this unprecedented experience.

Until this morning—

She saw her good friend Edith lying in a pool of blood, mixed with several images, which chilled her to the bone.

At the same time, to verify what she had 'seen,' she had gone early to seek out her friend Edith.

And with the jumbled visions being confirmed one after another, she knew her 'Spirit Medium' Bloodline had Awakened.

At this realization, the young girl was both thrilled and melancholic.

Who doesn't wish to be extraordinary from birth?

Being able to awaken the "Spirit Medium" Bloodline is naturally exciting, but it also proves that one is none other than Arthur's little Aunt...

Alas!

A heavy sigh in the depths of her heart made Linda's expression grow increasingly complex.

"Hey, Linda, good morning."

Arthur greeted her.

The title of little Aunt was still a bit hard to say, so he kept it to the familiar form.

And this relieved Linda.

"Good morning, Arthur."

Linda responded in the way she had before.

Then, the young girl pulled Arthur to one side and began to recount her experiences in a quiet voice.

As Arthur listened, his expression grew serious.

"Have you experienced anything bizarre around you?

Like feeling a chill?

Or hearing some whispering by your ear?"

Arthur inquired.

"No, it's just that occasionally I can see some images—a very chaotic kind, like last night, I clearly saw you holding Pan Zheng in your sleep, but the next moment you turned into a gigantic snake, one so large it was terrifying, bathing in endless thunder, with wings sprouting feathers, and then in a short while, more and more heads began to emerge on your neck..."

The girl shook her head, but her following words caused all of Arthur's features to tense up.

At this moment, Arthur had confirmed that the girl before him had likely experienced a Bloodline Awakening, and moreover, it was a Bloodline that could see "the future."

This...

It fit well with the characteristics of a 'Spirit Medium.'

Meaning, her words could indeed be fragments of the future.

'Turning into a snake, could be related to the "Dark Serpent Bloodline."

Bathing in thunder, must be from obtaining the "Glory Potion" from the hands of that Countess, completing the "Dark Serpent Bloodline."

Heads sprouting from the neck?

Could it be that my aliases are increasing?'

Arthur made reasonable explanations to himself.

But there was one thing he couldn't explain—

'If Old Charlie is a fake, then why can Linda Camille awaken a Bloodline?

Uncle Drake and Aunt Cassandra didn't have a Bloodline Awakening either, right?

It can't be that I'm the only Muggle in the family, can it?

To protect my feelings and to prevent the same fate as the 'Blood Marquis' family, did everyone conceal everything from me?

No! No!

The Kledos family are all normal people, it must be Linda's mother, Ms. Camille's family that has some extraordinary ancestry, and Linda, stimulated by something, only then experienced the Awakening!

Yes, it must be so!

Arthur emphasized in his heart, continuously nodding to reassure himself.

When he noticed Linda looking at him with confusion, Arthur said softly—

"These are all normal phenomena for the Kledos Family when a Bloodline Awakens. I have gone through something similar myself. After a while, you will be able to gradually master this ability."

"This ability?

Are there other abilities?"

Linda let out a relieved breath, then followed up with expectant inquiry.

Arthur nodded affirmatively and naturally said.

"Of course, the Kledos Family is born extraordinary!

Having the Bloodline of the Kledos Family, you were destined to stand out from the rest!"

Saying this, Arthur paused for a moment.

Then he changed the subject—

"So, now for a little test, let me ask you...

When you saw Clay's corpse, what did you 'see'?"

Chapter 205: The Second One!

What is the biggest difference between humans and animals?

A wise man once said, it's the creation and use of tools.

That's why Arthur hoped to be human.

Therefore, without any burden and filled with anticipation, he looked at Linda Camille, hoping to hear more information about Clay's death.

Under Arthur's gaze, the young girl became somewhat nervous, immediately turning her gaze towards 17 Xilin Street, and after merely a few seconds, a look of confusion appeared on her face.

"How is it, do you see anything?"

Arthur inquired.

"No, I didn't see anything, but I can feel there a... mockery, ostentation, and calm!"

Linda Camille said, frowning.

Calm?

She couldn't understand why she would feel calm at a crime scene.

Neither could Arthur.

However, upon seeing Linda looking at him uncertainly, the young 'Spirit Medium' chuckled softly and subconsciously wanted to pat the girl's head but remembered that she his little aunt, which clearly wasn't appropriate.

Instead, he gently patted her arm.

"Linda, believe me, you've already done well enough—your level of skill already surpasses most people,"

Arthur said softly.

Seeing no disappointment in Arthur's eyes and even receiving approval, the girl immediately nodded happily and didn't continue to ask about how she would compare to Arthur—deep in her heart, she never dared to hope to surpass Arthur, the reporter also said, Arthur was not only a perfect inheritor of the 'Spirit Medium' Bloodline but exceeded it!

With astonishing, terrifying Talent, he surpassed everyone!

She, of course, couldn't do that.

She just needed to surpass most people.

She at least had to deliberately stand behind Arthur silently, able to watch his figure from afar.

Come on!

Linda, you can do it!

The Kledos Family is born extraordinary!

The girl cheered herself on silently in her heart, while Arthur's gaze drifted towards the carriage—inside was another girl, Edith.

As the daughter of the Bernice family, it was somewhat strange for her to be in the carriage at this time.

After all, her brother had died, and her parents were still grieving.

"Edith injured her leg when she was a child,"

Linda immediately explained for her friend.

"I see,"

Arthur said, bowing slightly towards the direction of the carriage.

The girl inside the carriage, wearing a veil, promptly returned the gesture.

"Edith's really pitiable, if it weren't for damaging her leg when falling out of a tree, she would be chased by all the men in South Los by now,"

Linda sighed.

Arthur did not contest that.

Although the veil concealed her features, Arthur could vaguely make out her delicate countenance.

At the same time, Arthur was curious why Edith's illness lingered.

With the Bernice family's wealth, it simply shouldn't be possible.

Linda noticed Arthur's curiosity and promptly explained,

"The reason I say Edith is pitiable is because of this—when she fell from the tree, she went straight into a hole between the roots, which was completely hidden from the outside view. Moreover, Edith had fainted at the time, and by the time people found her, it was already the next day.

And in her efforts to climb out of the hole, Edith disregarded her injuries, which caused irreversible damage to her leg."

Arthur nodded in understanding, then pointed towards 17 Xilin Street.

Linda promptly waved at Arthur, understanding his intent.

"Be careful!"

As he was leaving, Arthur offered a word of caution.

"Don't worry, my mother told me about the dangers of being a 'Spirit Medium'—I'm ready!"

Linda said, at the same time taking a box off the carriage and showing it to Arthur.

Recognizing the familiar design, Arthur instantly identified it as the 'Kledos Family's Spirit Medium Box.'

As for where it came from?

It must have been Old Charlie giving it to Ms. Camille.

It might have been for remembrance.

It might also have been for self-defense.

However, no matter what, Arthur couldn't help but curse Old Charlie in his heart—

"You really spent a fortune chasing women!"

"Use it well, and you'll find the world has become different."

Having said that, Arthur headed towards No. 17 Xilin Street, while Linda nodded vigorously.

At this moment, the girl fully believed in what Arthur had said.

Even though some of his words might seem utterly absurd to others.

For instance: The Kledos Family is born extraordinary.

Inside No. 17 Xilin Street, Malz was still busy. Simon's questioning wasn't going smoothly; the neighbors around claimed they hadn't heard any unusual sounds.

As a result, the search area expanded—Dico and Simon, along with their team, began investigating Clay's circle of friends, especially those who often attended the salons.

And the old sheriff's busyness stemmed from Mrs. Bernice.

The lady wished to take her son's body home.

In response, the old sheriff mentioned the police department's rules.

But Mrs. Bernice insisted on her view and suggested she could donate two carriages to the police department.

To this, the old sheriff stated that while rules are rules, they could still be discussed.

When Arthur arrived, Mrs. Bernice had already offered to donate three carriages, and the old sheriff looked at Arthur expressionlessly. Following Arthur's nod, the old sheriff immediately said—

"Mrs. Bernice, thank you for your generosity.

Do you need me to send someone to help you transport Clay's body?"

"No need."

Mrs. Bernice shook her head with red-rimmed eyes.

After that, the lady bowed to Arthur.

"Mr. Kledos, you are a true 'Spirit Medium,' thank you for everything you've done for Clay.

If only I could've found you sooner, maybe, just maybe..."

A sob cut her off.

Mr. Bernice comforted his wife again.

"Please accept my condolences."

Arthur said softly.

Mr. Bernice helped his wife away. As they reached the door, the gentleman turned his head, revealing the sole emotion in his eyes—

I want others to mourn as well!

Arthur nodded slightly.

After the Bernice family and Linda Camille left, Dico was the first to rush back—

"Chief, consultant, Clay was such an idiot, a moron.

He always did strange things and then boasted about his bravery to others.

He even urinated into other people's drinks."

The fifth-level police officer couldn't resist complaining as soon as he returned.

"So, there should be many people who got along well with him."

The old sheriff sighed.

No one wants to be a fool, but everyone likes to amuse themselves with a fool.

This makes the fool believe he has many friends.

And it turns those who amuse themselves at the fool's expense into friends with a common interest.

Friend and friend, both are no friends.

"Hmm, we need to question more than thirty young people, and each one of them is no simple matter, each with either a wealthy father or a wealthy mother.

This is going to be a long task.

Simon has already gone to the first place: Jody's house."

As he spoke, Dico looked towards Arthur.

The fifth-level officer was hoping their miraculous consultant would have a better way.

Otherwise, he reckoned he wouldn't be able to return home for another two days and see his daughter.

"Don't worry, we'll have results soon."

Arthur spoke with a calm tone.

The young 'Spirit Medium' said this initially to soothe everyone's restless emotions, but in the very next moment after his words fell, a patrol officer who had been out with Simon burst in and said in a low voice—

"Police Chief, consultant, Jody is dead!"

Instantly, Malz and Dico turned their heads to look at Arthur.

Chapter 206: Slit Throat x Crow x Pigeon

"How did he die?"

Malz asked urgently.

"His throat was cut!

In a cellar in his own home—a cellar so hidden, not even the household butler knew when it had been dug up,"

the patrol officer replied immediately.

At that moment, Arthur and Malz exchanged glances, thinking of Clay who had died in the same way.

"Could this be a serial killing?"

the old sheriff instinctively asked the young spirit medium.

"Similar in nature but different in purpose—Malz, send more men to question those thirty or so young people and find out who is still alive?"

Arthur said this.

Malz was stunned.

"Are you suggesting... a murder to silence them?"

the old sheriff asked tentatively.

"If that's the case, then it's simple."

Arthur murmured softly, subtly controlling Wuni to take flight, searching for the things she cared about most at this moment.

Meanwhile, Malz yelled out—

"Dico, get everyone moving!

Quickly, quickly, quickly!"

the old sheriff urged repeatedly.

Aside from Hunter and Newt who still remained at the scene, the rest of the Shire District Police Station sprang into action.

Sitting crouched at the doorway of 17 Xilin Street, the old sheriff rubbed his swollen brow.

The cases he had encountered recently had left the old sheriff feeling drained.

Having been a policeman for over thirty years, the old sheriff felt that his first thirty years were like those of a fake cop, catching petty thieves daily, apprehending robbers twice a week, and facing a murder case only once every half a month; serial killing cases were even rarer, sometimes not seen in a year.

And now?

Murders were seen every day.

Serial killings were almost becoming the norm.

'Were we simply too incompetent before to come across them?

Or...

has the wheel of destiny begun to turn?'

The old sheriff thought to himself quietly, then suddenly turned to Arthur, who was lost in thought, and said,

"Bob would definitely enjoy these days."

"Hmm?"

Arthur looked puzzled.

"That guy, during the early days of the Seven Years' War, ended up in Daredevil Camp for assaulting a superior. Everyone thought he was a goner—yet, who knew that after the camp changed hands for the eleventh time, he was still alive, earning him the nickname 'Undying Bob'!

Moreover, his repeated combat experiences earned him the appreciation of the Daredevil Camp command, not only promoting him to captain but also putting him in charge of special training in the camp,"

Arthur listened quietly as Malz talked about his good friend.

Arthur was very committed to a crucial part of his plan.

However, he didn't inquire further but waited for Malz to continue.

"I owe my life to Bob; during a cavalry skirmish on the West Coast, he took a bullet for me. In gratitude, I spent my salary to buy him a lot of booze— the guy is a heavy drinker; when drunk, he would talk nonsense with me, claiming he should have been a noble or something.

After the war ended, I wanted to invite him to South Los, but Bob said he didn't like these peaceful times and went to become a bounty hunter. Moreover, when he left, he mysteriously told me that when we meet again, it would be when the wheel of destiny is turning,"

Malz said, chuckling at himself.

"Who turns the wheel of destiny at nearly sixty?"

The old sheriff shook his head, his eyes filled with emotion, but Arthur patted his shoulder.

In the surprised look of the old sheriff, Arthur said very seriously.

"Some took on a divine battle at the age of seventy-two.

Sixty isn't too late!

You could even say it's just right!"

"Just right?"

The old sheriff asked quietly.

Arthur nodded more seriously.

"Trust me, it's just right!"

The old sheriff was stunned and then muttered 'just right, just right' to himself, his expression gradually regaining vitality.

Seeing this, Arthur finally breathed a sigh of relief.

He didn't want one of his important partners to start thinking about quitting.

This simple, kind-hearted, and upright spirit medium not only had to tread carefully but also had to keep an eye on his partners' morale from time to time. Who could understand the difficulty?

Whew!

He took a deep breath inwardly.

The young spirit medium spoke again—

"Malz, do you have any dreams?"

"To retire!"

"Besides retiring?"

"To hold my grandson!"

"And besides those two?"

"Hmm... I want to see a miracle."

Malz's suddenly hushed voice startled Arthur.

"Haha, just take it as my delirious talk, how could miracles be so easy to come by?"

The old sheriff laughed heartily, changing the subject.

He asked about the serial killings once more.

"Just wait a bit longer!"

Arthur's response was double-edged.

About half an hour later, the patrolling officers returned one by one—

"Police Chief, advisor, the White from the White family is dead!"

"Police Chief, advisor, the Sharp from the Sharp family is dead!"

"Police Chief, advisor, the Bacon from the Bacon family is dead!"

...

One report after another.

Another three young people had died.

Adding to the earlier death of Jody, that makes four people dead, coinciding with Clay's chest and abdomen wounds, along with other wounds of varying depth everywhere.

"It really is a silence killing!

Damn it, these four guys must have known something!

Plus, they all died in very hidden places in their homes, especially Bacon, that fellow's body weighed nearly 200 pounds, yet he was found in a treehouse—clearly had his throat slit under the tree, but was moved to the treehouse. This murderer must be very strong!

Bacon house's butler also mentioned, Bacon has always been secretive lately, going out even without being invited!"

Jody, White, and Sharp were similar!"

Dico spoke, panting.

Even though assisted by horses, Dico still felt exhausted from rushing back and forth all morning.

Malz did not contradict his subordinate's words.

But the old sheriff was still puzzled by one thing—Clay's wounds.

What caused these kinds of wounds?

Most likely they were contract-like in nature.

The four men must have seen or indirectly caused the person who killed Clay to die, hence this kind of agreement was formed—possibly even coerced.

Coerced by the person who slit Clay's throat.

But why then would the coercer kill the four afterwards?

Doesn't make sense, does it?

Wouldn't keeping such leverage be better?

The old sheriff thought about this as he looked toward Arthur.

"Because it can't be done!"

Arthur said and gestured for Dico to drive, then headed straight for the carriage. Malz quickly followed him.

The carriage started moving as Dico snapped the whip.

Arthur directed Dico forward.

"What on earth is going on?"

'Miss Anna' what did she tell you?"

The old sheriff asked curiously.

"Have you not noticed some common aspects?"

Arthur countered.

"All had their throats slit, all died in hidden places, even if they had to create them, and they all secretly went out."

The old sheriff blurted out.

"Anything else?"

Arthur continued.

"And..."

The old sheriff couldn't think of anything else.

"Do you remember their names?"

Arthur asked again.

The old sheriff immediately shook his head.

Arthur looked at the old sheriff's expression, but spoke softly to himself—

"So that's how it is!"

And at that moment, a pitch-black crow in the sky above the carriage dived with an aggression fiercer than an eagle's, directly seizing a white pigeon.

Chapter 207: Father in the Pigeon Cage!

Walking past an intersection westward from Garden Middle Street brings one to Western Garden Street, different from the shop-filled North Street and the rented South Street.

Most of Western Garden Street is comprised of South Los locals or those who have purchased properties.

Therefore, it's even more peaceful here.

Under the tall elm trees, children run by from time to time, with crisp shouts ringing out as parents chase after them, giving warnings.

Standing on the terrace of number 99 on Western Garden Street, Tarite watched this scene, his eyes filled with envy.

After pausing for a moment, he rubbed the corner of his eye and turned around to finish his last unfinished business.

Tidying up the pigeon cages.

According to that gentleman, all the pigeons had to be killed.

But...

Two years of companionship had already made him, a lonely fellow, see these pigeons as an indispensable part of his life.

So, for the first time, he defied that gentleman's will.

He planned to return these pigeons to the countryside and entrust them to reliable people.

And then?

Express gratitude!

Any more pursuits?

Gone.

With the child's accident, everything lost its meaning.

All that he had done, his entire life, had come to a complete halt in that moment, leaving only...

Revenge!

Therefore, he was extremely grateful to that gentleman—without his help, he would never have been able to accomplish his revenge.

Coo, coo-coo!

The sudden cooing of pigeons startled Tarite, who then quickened his pace, yet still methodically arranged the pigeon cages, opening one after another and releasing the pigeons inside.

Watching the pigeons fly away, Tarite finally turned to look in the direction of the terrace door—number 99 on Western Garden Street was a one-and-a-half-story building, with a living room, kitchen on the ground floor, and a bedroom on the second floor, used for storing sundries, while the entire terrace was converted into a special structure with pigeon cages facing each other on both sides, one side giving a view of the street.

A young man wearing a black double-breasted coat, holding a terrifying puppet, and carrying a cat cage stood in front of the terrace door.

"Your cat scared my pigeons,"

Tarite said as he sat on the only stool inside the terrace, his movements suggesting that his legs were not very agile.

The Pigeon Breeder reached for the long-stemmed chimney-style pipe beside him and added some tobacco—different from the classic billiard style, the long-stemmed chimney style had a stem about 20 centimeters long, with the bowl elongated into a rectangular shape resembling a chimney, allowing for the packing of more tobacco, a favorite among some old smokers in South Los.

"I thought it was 'Anna' who scared them."

Arthur replied with a smile.

"'Anna'?"

Tarite blinked, then guessed the identity of the young man before him.

The knowledgeable Pigeon Keeper, who could easily read and write, still maintained rather good reading habits. Unlike the previous reading for entertainment and leisure, his reading over the past two years was to better keep track of his enemies.

Therefore, he knew about 'Spirit Medium,' who had been gaining fame in South Los lately.

Realization dawned in the Pigeon Keeper's eyes as he looked at Arthur and 'Anna.'

'Anna' is not frightening, compared to some fellows... This lady maintains her manners,"

Tarite said softly.

"I'll convey your compliment to 'Anna' truthfully. So, can you also tell me more—although I already know some things, they are incomplete,"

Arthur said.

"Curious?"

Tarite laughed.

"Of course, I've always been a very curious person, and after the awakening of my bloodline, such curiosity has become irresistibly intense,"

Arthur nodded, his expression becoming perfectly convincing under the effect of "Bluff."

This talk, half true, half false.

Being human, Arthur naturally had curiosity.

However, Arthur could control his curiosity very well.

Because curiosity really could kill the cat.

Especially after taking on the identity of the 'modern-day Black Cat', Arthur became even more cautious.

But he didn't mind cooperating with the Tarite in front of him.

"There's nothing much to say, and there's no story you're hoping for—three years ago, when I was taking my daughter home, we encountered four bastards galloping through the city. My daughter didn't get out of the way and was hit by a horse and killed, and me, trying to save her, also got my leg broken by the horse, leaving me a cripple."

Tarite spoke softly, his expressionless face as if telling someone else's story.

"So that's what happened, can you then tell me about the incident at 17 Xilin Street?"

Arthur nodded his head and continued to ask.

"Of course.

In order to take down those four guys smoothly, I had to kill a fool—although I feel somewhat sorry for him, I'm willing to give my life in compensation."

Tarite maintained a matter-of-fact demeanor.

Yet, with the help of "Eagle Eye" and "Insight," Arthur easily spotted the tell.

Tarite was not good at lying.

"Hmm, I also know a story, just as unworthy of anticipation, but since you've told me one, I think I should also share one with you in return—three years ago, a father was taking his daughter home when four young men, out of a competitive spirit, suddenly started galloping in the city. Caught off-guard, the little girl froze in terror, and the father who rushed over intended to scoop her into his arms. But the horse was too fast, and he couldn't make it in time; the little girl was sent flying, and the father himself was hit and left with a leg disability.

However, when the police arrived, they concluded that it was the father and daughter who darted out, leading to the tragic outcome.

Unwilling to accept this, the father sought justice for his daughter all over.

But the families of those four young men were too powerful, and the father's efforts were futile.

This father became desperate.

He didn't know what to do.

It was then that someone suddenly appeared, asking the father if he really wanted revenge.

The father agreed, and thereafter, this father transformed himself into the Pigeon Breeder.

He began transmitting messages with carrier pigeons for a secretive group, and gradually, those four people got involved as well.

The timing became ripe.

With arrangements made secretly by that person, those four who didn't want the fool to steal the spotlight started using 'secret societies' as bait to lure the fool out.

They didn't really want to kill the fool, but an accident happened, and the fool did die.

In their panic, they made a pact.

But such a pact was incredibly fragile because they overlooked the person lurking in the shadows, peering at everything—"just by tying phrases like 'I know what you did' to the leg of the carrier pigeon, one could easily summon them to a secret place known only to them and then cut their throats."

Arthur paused at this point, as if listening to something.

Then, he added another sentence—

"No, it seems that at that time, the father had already wanted revenge, but feared that by killing one of them, he would alert the other three, thus he hesitated to make a move."

As he spoke, Arthur turned to look at Tarite.

"That father was very incompetent."

The Pigeon Breeder judged with his mouth as he picked up a match nearby, ready to light his pipe.

But Arthur snatched the pipe from the Pigeon Breeder's hand first.

He lowered his head and took a whiff, the familiar smell of bitter almonds mixed with a slight pungency.

"You don't smoke, yet you choose a pipe that old smokers would pick—I have a friend who is an old smoker, so I know what old smokers are like.

Therefore, I think if you've just started smoking, cigarettes would be a good choice.

Of course, this is your choice.

However, my story isn't over yet, would you care to listen to the rest?"

Chapter 208: The Pigeon Releaser!

"Do you still remember the fool from the story I just told?"

Arthur asked Tarite.

The Pigeon Breeder nodded.

"I do."

"In fact, in the story I just told, the fool didn't die by accident, but rather... he desired death with all his heart!"

Arthur spoke slowly.

The Pigeon Breeder was stunned, disbelief flashing in his eyes.

"Impossible!

How could someone who only knows how to show off desire death so earnestly?"

The Pigeon Breeder shook his head quickly, not accepting this notion.

"Of course, it's possible!

The fool was ridden with guilt, and to compensate for this guilt, he had no choice but to pretend to be a fool—because he discovered that as long as he was ridiculed, humiliating himself, the person he felt guilty toward would be happy.

So, he became a fool."

As Arthur said this, he sighed.

"But, but..."

"Pain?"

The fool was willing to face death, naturally he could do it, even if it meant being stabbed four times in the chest and stomach and then having his throat slashed by the person he felt guilty toward, he didn't make a sound and just lay there holding his breath, pretending to be dead.

The fool had long known about the plan of the person he felt guilty toward.

He chose to go along with it.

After all...

It was his sister."

Listening to Arthur's words, the Pigeon Breeder sat there dumbfounded, with a vacant expression.

The words of the young 'Spirit Medium' were something he had never considered.

All he knew was of a scoundrel who, out of jealousy for the affection of their parents, had deliberately pushed his sister off a tree into a tree pit and had mocked her relentlessly.

This...

Unconsciously, the Pigeon Breeder raised his head, looking towards Arthur.

The young 'Spirit Medium' stood in place, his expression serene, his gaze calmly on him.

Unconsciously, the Pigeon Breeder believed the words of the young 'Spirit Medium'.

"I, I..."

The Pigeon Breeder opened his mouth but was completely at a loss for words.

At this moment, his mind was in turmoil.

But the young 'Spirit Medium' spoke again, his voice still calm—

"Jody, White, Sharp, and Bacon have died, but do you think that counts as revenge?"

I don't think so.

Have those four guys escaped the punishment they deserved just because the police are useless?

That's not it either.

It's because of their families!

With wealth intertwined with interests, creating enormous power, they shielded those four guys and protected hundreds more just like them.

So, your vengeance must continue!

Perhaps you can't do more, but at the very least, you should completely uproot the families to which those four belonged!"

During this speech, Arthur's lips curved slightly upward, revealing a congenial smile.

And listening to the words of the young 'Spirit Medium,' the Pigeon Breeder was completely dumbstruck.

He had always thought that the young 'Spirit Medium' stood on the side of 'justice' in the eyes of the world.

But these words...

"What is your purpose?"

The Pigeon Breeder was filled with astonishment, but he was also on guard.

"I'm annoyed by them.

I covet their family estates.

And conveniently, I have a friend who can take care of this matter properly."

Arthur said frankly.

He wouldn't talk about any grand righteousness, nor would he bluff, and facing a father seeking revenge for his daughter, the young 'Spirit Medium' still maintained a bit of a moral baseline.

And again, the Pigeon Breeder was stunned by the young 'Spirit Medium's' candor.

The young 'Spirit Medium' didn't hurry him, instead, he walked into the modified veranda, feeling the space compressed by the pigeon cages, resting his hand on the rusted railing, gazing up at the small patch of sky overhead, then looking down at the street of Western Garden Street, and said lightly—

"It's quite large."

...

The Bernice family did not return to the Swan District.

Instead, they brought Clay's body back to their manor on the outskirts of South Los.

Before the body was brought back, the entire Bernice Manor had been rearranged by the butler, with gold utensils, brightly colored tapestries, and such all packed away.

The servants had also been informed of some matters in advance.

To this, each servant understood clearly and maintained a mournful demeanor.

Inside the estate owner's master bedroom, Mrs. Bernice's cries resounded non-stop.

Mr. Bernice sat in his study, looking dazed.

When there were no outsiders left, Mr. Bernice shed all pretense.

All that filled his mind now was Clay's voice and laughter.

Though a foolish simpleton who knew not the weight of things, he was kindhearted.

"Clay, if you can hear Daddy's words, then you must stay here a while longer—I will avenge you.

I will catch that bastard.

I will flay him with my own hands!"

Mr. Bernice said in a lowered voice, his face twisted with ferocity.

Even though he had hired that young 'Spirit Medium,' several suspects still filtered through his mind.

It could be them.

It could also not be.

But, that's not important!

What's important is, his son is dead!

Then...

'You will join my son in death!'

Thinking this to himself, Mr. Bernice gestured for the butler, saying—

"Go and discreetly contact the Lady of the Eternal Night for me, tell her I have a business matter to discuss with her!"

"Understood, sir."

The trusted butler bowed and left.

In the study, Mr. Bernice was once again left alone.

He didn't like the Lady of the Eternal Night, but it wasn't for the reasons rumored outside, because of the lady's cold, barbaric, and bloody methods.

Rather, it was because he saw a younger version of himself in her.

Yet he greatly admired her!

Admired her decisive and ruthless approach to achieving her goals.

Of course, there was also a hint of fear!

After all, he had no wish to become her target.

But, that was before.

Now?

He couldn't care less.

What about his eldest son, Chloe?

Yes, he still had his eldest son, Chloe!

But, that was all he had—the eldest son, Chloe!

Having lost a second son, he absolutely did not want to lose the eldest—for this, he had to change the approach he had maintained for nearly twenty years.

Sighing internally, Mr. Bernice stood up and walked towards the bedroom.

Upon leaving the study, the gentleman became calm once more.

He would not panic before his wife.

However, at the bedroom door, Mr. Bernice unexpectedly saw Linda Camille coming out of the bedroom—for Ms. Camille's daughter, Mr. Bernice was well acquainted, and happy to have her associate with his family. If it weren't for the fact that his eldest son was already married, and the simpleton younger son was completely unworthy of her, he would have already sought her mother's hand in marriage for his son.

"Linda, take extra care of Edith, please.

She is too fragile, sigh."

Saying this, Mr. Bernice entered the bedroom.

Passing by Linda, Mr. Bernice completely failed to notice the astonishment on her face.

Behind him, the bedroom door closed.

Linda touched the sleeve sword concealed at her wrist, the arm crossbow on her forearm, and the dagger under her armpit, then picked up her suitcase and headed to her friend Edith's bedroom with a complex expression.

These items had been given to her by her mother before she left, informing her they were a Kledos Family tradition.

She had been somewhat puzzled before, but now she understood a bit better.

Knock, knock-knock!

"Come in."

After Linda knocked, Edith's crisp voice rang out.

But when Linda pushed open the door, she found Edith standing by the bedroom window, feeding pigeons—the birds flew in through the open window, with as many as seven or eight of them.

Corn kernels mixed with a bit of japonica rice attracted the pigeons.

Even back at home, Edith wore a veil that obscured her face, revealing only her eyes, which were hidden as she lowered her head.

Seeing this scene, Linda would have felt only pity in the past, but now it was tinged with deep caution.

"You know everything, don't you?"

Suddenly, Edith spoke.

Linda was taken aback.

"Your expression is too easy to read—it's quite uninspiring, Linda.

So...

Linda, would you please go die?"

Edith's voice was soft as she slightly raised her hand.

Instantly, the pigeons perched on the windowsill flew straight towards Linda as if they had gone mad.

Instinctively, Linda was about to shoot a crossbow arrow, but before the Kledos Family's bastard could truly attack, she heard—

Caw!

The crow's call.

The next moment was...

Shadows darted, crimson erupted!

Chapter 209: Happy Fool!

Black weaved through the white and gray.

Feathers danced, and pigeons cooed in sorrow.

Wuni's beak and talons, as sharp as blades, performed precise throat-cutting surgeries on the pigeons, and by the time Wuni stood on the windowsill again, it began leisurely grooming its wings. When the pigeon gripped in its right claw still tried to struggle, the talon instantly tightened.

Suddenly, the pigeon's body was crushed.

Wuni picked its favorite tender meats to swallow.

'Is this a crow?

More vicious than an eagle, no doubt!'

Linda drew a cold breath inwardly.

When Edith across her looked at Linda, her eyes showed surprise.

"No wonder you stood up so 'open and aboveboard,' you've raised such a vicious crow. Is that your secret weapon?"

Edith inquired.

Linda's instinct was to deny, but for some reason, she nodded instinctively, and her words came out as,

"Secret weapon?"

No, it's just a pet.

Just like my cats."

At that moment, the girl's voice was indifferent, but her tone and demeanor were exactly like Arthur when he was in his usual 'Bluff' state.

"A pet?"

Edith's beautiful eyes narrowed slightly, then she cautiously surveyed her surroundings.

As someone who raised pigeons as a method, Edith was well aware of the formidable nature of these seemingly insignificant creatures.

One crow had decimated all the pigeons she had raised for a long time.

If there were to be three cats as well, her chances of victory would drop by another thirty percent.

Thinking this, the daughter of the Bernice family moved her feet subtly, distancing herself from Wuni while quietly saying—

"This alone is not enough.

To seek revenge, I haven't just raised some pigeons.

I've also learned swordsmanship, physical combat..."

Her drawn-out tone caught Linda's attention, and the daughter of the Bernice family immediately charged at Linda.

Clang!

A flexible sword sprung from her belt, aiming straight for Linda's throat, like a venomous snake leaping from the bushes, hidden and vicious.

This sword strike the Bernice family's daughter had practiced hundreds of times.

For that unexpected moment.

Although she had never expected the surprise to arise with Linda, whom she had always looked down upon as a silly girl, it did not stop her from wanting to pierce Linda's throat with a single thrust.

Afterward?

Naturally, it was to arrange the scene.

The murderer would of course be the 'Throat Slasher'.

She, as one of the victims, had merely been lucky enough to escape, but she hadn't gotten a good look at the killer's face. She only felt the voice was familiar.

Then?

Of course, it would be time to ask her elder brother, Chloe, why he did this.

Why he wanted to kill so many people.

Of course, it must be done 'discreetly'.

With that thought, the flexible sword in the Bernice family's daughter's hand became even more ruthless.

But Linda simply raised her left hand—

Whoosh!

Thud!

The arm crossbow hidden in her left hand fired a crossbow arrow, nailing itself into the right shoulder of the Bernice family's daughter.

The Bernice family's daughter was taken aback, and then switched the sword to her left hand.

"My left hand and right hand trained for two and a half years to achieve the same sword-drawing speed..."

She hadn't finished speaking when Linda raised her right hand.

Whoosh!

Thud!

The arrow nailed itself into the left shoulder of the Bernice family's daughter.

This time, the flexible sword could no longer be held in the daughter's hand and fell directly to the floor.

What was more critical was the faint sensation of paralysis began to spread.

"Poisoned?!"

"You actually coated the arrow with poison!"

The Bernice family daughter looked incredulous.

Linda was somewhat shocked, even more shocked than when her two arrows aimed at the throat had both hit the shoulder—because what she had coated was anesthetic, and she regretted not heeding her mother's advice to coat them with poison.

Otherwise, there would have been no need for a second arrow.

With her poor archery, it was a miracle that both arrows hit at all.

'Poison! Next time I must switch to a poison that seals the throat upon contact with blood!'

Linda reminded herself.

Meanwhile, the Bernice family daughter had changed her expression; not only did her demeanor weaken, her eyes filled with tears, and her voice choked up—

"I had my reasons!

It was Clay who pushed me off the tree, and although he knew I was in the tree pit, he didn't tell anyone, causing me to miss the best treatment window and become a cripple.

Moreover, he ridiculed me with a bunch of people. What's wrong with me killing him?"

By now, the Bernice family daughter had started to roar.

But Linda remained unmoved.

She had just witnessed the truth—

Back then, it was to get more attention and affection from her parents that Edith chose to hide in that tree pit. But waiting got too boring, and when she saw the birds in the tree, she climbed up, only to fall down accidentally and roll into the tree pit.

The whole incident had nothing to do with Clay.

On the contrary, it was Clay who found Edith in the tree pit.

And Clay hated himself for not finding Edith sooner.

As an older brother, Clay felt he hadn't fulfilled his responsibilities.

Edith went with the flow and pushed all the blame onto Clay, even vaguely hinting to her family that it was Clay who had pushed her.

And the result?

Clay was abandoned by Mr. and Mrs. Bernice, and his elder brother, Chloe, also distanced himself from his own brother.

Clay became increasingly guilty, to the extent that when he realized that others laughing at him could make Edith smile, he would do it without hesitation.

Because, under immense pressure, Clay's perceptions were distorted.

The fool actually believed it was his fault.

He, who should have been the savior, became the most tragic one.

Therefore, at this moment, Linda Camille looked at Edith's crying and choking face, and her irritation reached its limit—

"Shut your mouth!

You blathering idiot!"

In a fit of rage, Linda twisted her waist, stepped forward, and threw a punch in one fluid motion.

Her fist struck precisely on Edith's jawline.

Wham!

The Bernice family daughter who was playing pitiful was sent crashing to the ground, a tremor in her brain causing her dizziness, yet she continued to mutter through her lips.

"It's not my fault; it's Clay's fault for not finding me earlier..."

Hearing these words, Linda flipped her wrist and a sleeve sword shot straight out from the inside of her wrist, pressing against the Bernice family daughter's throat.

"If you dare say one more word, I'll kill you right now!"

Linda's eyes turned icy as she growled.

She was truly enraged.

She had never imagined there could be such shameless people in the world who twisted the facts.

But soon after, Linda began to worry.

How was she to resolve the current situation?

The Bernice family daughter had been knocked down by her, but the problem was not solved.

If anything, things had become more troublesome.

Because they were at Bernice Manor at the moment!

And if she just left, this woman with her ability to distort the truth would surely slander her.

'What should I do?

What to do?

If it were Arthur, what would he do?'

Linda began to ponder.

And just at that moment—

Bang!

The door to the Bernice family daughter's room was kicked open.

Chapter 210: Merchants, Merchants, and Merchants!

Arthur, Malz, Dico, and others were standing outside the door, along with Mr. and Mrs. Bernice.

However, it was Mr. Bernice who kicked open the door.

This esteemed gentleman of South Los glared at his daughter on the floor, fury rising in his eyes. Without uttering another word, he picked up the flexible sword from the ground and stabbed at his daughter.

Mrs. Bernice sobbed quietly, yet she did not intervene.

Because she knew that Edith, having done such a thing, deserved no sympathy from anyone and had to be punished.

Even though...

It was heartbreaking!

Otherwise, the Bernice family would be the ones to suffer.

Mrs. Bernice knew this; Mr. Bernice was even more aware of it.

Thus, the gentleman showed no mercy.

At the side, Linda slightly relaxed, but she still felt it was not perfect—being one of the heirs to the Kledos bloodline always gave her a unique perspective.

However, Linda was not yet accustomed to it.

Among those present, however, there were those who were accustomed and had long since excelled at it.

"Wait!"

When Arthur called out softly, he had already appeared next to Mr. Bernice, his palm seizing the other's wrist, and his words flowed out unceasingly—

"Mr. Bernice, please calm down.

Although facing such misfortune is enough to break anyone's heart, we must understand that it is the members of the 'Death Poetry Society' who instigated Edith and your enemies who exacerbated the situation, turning it into what it is now.

So, we need to talk."

As he spoke, Arthur looked toward Bernice.

Bernice also looked toward Arthur.

Their gazes intersected.

A second later, the flexible sword was thrown on the ground.

"Lord Kledos, please come to my study; we need to have a serious talk."

Mr. Bernice invited the young 'Spirit Medium'.

"Of course!"

The young 'Spirit Medium' gladly accepted the invitation.

From beginning to end, the young 'Spirit Medium' didn't glance once at Edith on the ground—although he wished she would just die right then, Bernice absolutely could not be the one to do it.

Because that would be misdirected rage!

Did Bernice hate Edith?

Of course, he hated her so much he wanted to kill this daughter who had caused his younger son's death.

But that certainly didn't mean Bernice's heart was undisturbed.

Perhaps in a moment of impulse, Bernice would indeed have done it, but what about afterwards?

When had cooled down, Bernice would definitely regret it, and as soon as he regretted it, this Mr. Bernice would certainly need to rationalize his actions.

And what better rationale than 'There were too many people around; I had to consider the reputation of the Bernice family'?

None!

That was the perfect excuse, and once Mr. Bernice found this justification, the next step would be to start shifting the blame.

Most likely he would conclude: it was because people like Arthur were watching that I felt compelled to act.

And with that conclusion, he would convince those around him who blamed him.

Such as his wife, his eldest son, and so on.

And by that time, Arthur would inexplicably have gained a new enemy.

Therefore, Edith needed to die, but not here.

She had to die at the hands of the 'Death Poetry Society'!

Because Edith knew too much, and they were killing to silence her!

The 'Death Poetry Society' had caused him so much trouble; it was only right that he occasionally reciprocate, wasn't it?

Even if members of the 'Death Poetry Society' came forward, no one would believe them.

Truly the perfect 'scapegoat'!

Beyond that, there was the most crucial part—

Benefits!

Arthur needed to plan the initial arrangements for "Mr. Wu's Exchange," and the Bernice family's warehouse was an indispensable part.

Following Mr. Bernice, he entered a private study where the young "Spirit Medium" saw the gentleman retrieve a bottle of wine and two glasses from behind a bookshelf.

After the young "Spirit Medium" gestured with his hand, Mr. Bernice poured himself a glass, drank it down in one gulp, and then poured another for himself.

However, the wine bottle and the other glass were put back behind the bookshelf.

Mr. Bernice, holding his glass, walked back toward the young "Spirit Medium," unbuttoning his shirt collar as he walked.

Throughout the process, the young "Spirit Medium" maintained a smile and kept silent.

"Eagle Eye," "Insight" were constantly flickering.

'The first drink, the emotions had already settled.

The pouring thereafter was in contemplation.

Unbuttoning the shirt collar was to mislead me.'

'Huh, should it be said that he is indeed a great merchant with a background in shipping?' he mused.

With a clear understanding in his heart, Arthur was not in the least troubled, instead, he breathed a sigh of relief—he did not wish to discuss the 'borrowing' of dock warehouse rights with an angry father.

That would lead nowhere.

Negotiating with a cool-headed and astute businessman, however, was a different matter.

Especially now that he had leverage, everything was about to change.

As the other man gestured for him to sit, Arthur immediately sat down on the opposite sofa but still didn't speak.

At this moment, waiting for the other party to speak was the best option.

After sipping his wine again, Mr. Bernice sighed heavily—

"I'm very sorry to have troubled you, 20,000 Gold Coins will subsequently be delivered to No. 2 Cork Street, and I will add another 20,000 Gold Coins, hoping you will accept it," he said.

Mr. Bernice looked genuinely apologetic and sincere as if he truly wanted to make amends to Arthur.

"Thank you for your patronage.

However, the 'Spirit Medium' does not accept money beyond the agreed remuneration," Arthur said, smiling and shaking his head politely in refusal.

While 40,000 Gold Coins was a lot, it was not enough to handle the current situation.

Mr. Bernice caught this implication.

This made him realize that this time, he might really need to bleed heavily.

Looking at the young 'Spirit Medium' smiling before him, Mr. Bernice always felt like he was seeing a little fox that had stolen a hen, smiling so irritatingly...

Angry!

Yet, Mr. Bernice did not truly get angry, instead, he tentatively asked another question.

"What do you think of Edith?"

"And what do you think of Marinda Julius Caesar?" Arthur asked with a smile in reply.

In his heart, Arthur softly applauded Mr. Bernice.

Undoubtedly, the man had likely guessed what he wanted, preparing to use his daughter as a bargaining chip to pull him onto the Bernice family's carriage.

This solved the reputation problem perfectly and also gained his support.

More importantly, someone would be able to watch over his own daughter.

Even if it meant parting with some dock warehouse rights, it was a huge win.

It was a win-win-win situation.

'Is this what it means to be a self-made great merchant?' Arthur thought to himself, while Mr. Bernice kept insisting.

"Miss Caesar's excellence is beyond doubt, but Edith can do better—she now owns 20 percent of the Bernice family's succession rights, and with the unfortunate incident that befell Clay, the 20 percent of his rights, I am also willing to leave to someone who can bring happiness to Edith."

Listening to Mr. Bernice's words, Arthur for the first time was glad he didn't have the ability to see souls, otherwise, he might not have been able to resist, right?

Poor Clay!

He was such a fool!

With this sentiment in his heart, Arthur stood up to the surprised gaze of Mr. Bernice, walked straight to the door, opened it, and said as he opened his mouth—

"I'm not good with words, so..."

"Why don't you talk to her personally?"

Outside the door, Marinda stood with a frosty expression, smoking a pipe.

